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ANNUAL REPORT OF THE ADMINISTRATOR AND RELATED MATTERS

Addendum

Reports of the Joint Inspection Unit of interest to the United Nations Development Programme

1. The Joint Inspection Unit (JIU) has prepared seven reports since the last note by the Administrator to the Executive Board (DP/1996/18/Add.3) on this subject. Of these, five are of interest or concern to the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and to the Executive Board, and are the subject of the present note.

2. Throughout the year, full cooperation continued to be extended to JIU by UNDP, both at headquarters and in the country offices, as and when necessary, in developing the JIU overall annual work programme, and in the preparation of the individual reports. Thereafter, comments on the drafts or final versions of these reports were provided to JIU by UNDP either separately or as part of consolidated views from the Administrative Committee on Coordination (ACC), which constituted the responses of the Secretary-General.

3. The contents of the JIU reports have been taken into account, as necessary, in the activities of UNDP and will be reflected in the reports before the Executive Board insofar as they are relevant to the respective agenda items for its sessions during the year. Of these reports, three have been considered by the General Assembly, which took no action on one, adopted a resolution on the second and deferred examination of the third, as shown below.

4. The reports of most direct concern to UNDP are as follows:

JIU/REP/96/3 Coordination of policy and programming frameworks for more effective development cooperation

5. Noting that genuine coordination among development partners, including especially the host countries, the United Nations system and the multilateral financial institutions as well as bilateral donors, has become a high priority objective on the international agenda, the report provides a comprehensive overview of the corresponding prospects and challenges. It highlights the responsibilities and capacities of host Governments, the policies and practices of donors and the operations of the United Nations and the intergovernmental systems.

6. Its recommendations relate to the country strategy note, periodic evaluation of policy and programming frameworks, system-wide standard formats for development cooperation, inter-agency development information facilities in the resident coordinator's office, field-level coordination committees, regional and subregional coordination, and the role of the Economic and Social Council.

7. The comments by UNDP on this report were generally positive. It was noted that the thrust of the report was to exhort concerned organizations to implement known provisions of resolution 50/120 and other relevant General Assembly resolutions, which were already very familiar to UNDP. UNDP and other operational activities funds and programmes were working on these resolutions through the Joint Consultative Group on Policy and the Consultative Committee on Programme and Operational Questions. The response of UNDP refers to several activities already under way to implement the resolutions.

JIU/REP/96/4 Review of financial resources allocated by the United Nations system to activities by non-governmental organizations

8. This report notes that the rapid and intense changes in the international scene had given non-governmental organizations (NGOs) responsibilities additional to their traditional cooperation with the United Nations system, in order to respond to the new challenges involving them in practically all the activities performed by the entire United Nations system. According to estimates of the secretariat of the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), the total contribution of developed country NGOs to developing countries was $8.3 billion in 1992, or 13 per cent of all development assistance. No precise global figure is available from the United Nations system.

9. The conclusion reached by the Inspector in this new area of investigation of the financial management of resources devoted to NGOs by the United Nations system is that there is a need for a better accounting and reporting procedure by the entire system.

10. Although each organization knows approximately and in general terms what portion of its programme budget goes to NGO activities, the majority of them could not provide the Inspector with precise and properly recorded financial

figures. Thus, no comparable statistics could be presented to show the allocation of resources to NGO activities by each organization.

11. In its comments, UNDP on the whole agreed with the analysis and recommendations of the report as they pertain to the Programme. UNDP is currently working to develop a series of guidelines that will enable it to begin gathering data on NGOs and other organizations of civil society so as to form country-level databases as well as to appoint full-time focal points for civil society within those offices.

JIU/REP/96/5 Common services at United Nations Headquarters

12. This report recalls that the objectives of common services within the United Nations system are to achieve administrative and technical uniformity, ensure the most efficient use of personnel and resources and avoid the establishment and operation of competitive or overlapping facilities and services. It assesses how these and related objectives are being pursued by the United Nations and its affiliated programmes and funds (UNDP, the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) and the United Nations Office for Project Services (UNOPS) which conveniently share common headquarters and other similar denominators, including financial and personnel regulations, membership, constituency, etc.

13. The report notes that at present barely 3 per cent of the combined administrative and programme support resources at the common headquarters of the organizations concerned have been brought under common service arrangements. Furthermore, the programmes and funds that share more profound affinities have as yet no common services specific to all of them. Accordingly, the Inspectors offer several recommendations concerning policy guidance and implementation for enhancing the system-wide role of common services.

JIU/REP/96/6 Inspection of the application of United Nations recruitment, placement and promotion policies: Part II - Placement and Promotions

14. This report starts by noting that some may argue that 1966 was hardly the appropriate time to discuss the issues of placement and promotion of staff in the United Nations, given the most severe financial crisis in the Organization's history, and a downsizing process involving 1,000 vacant posts by the end of the year.

15. However, the Inspectors considered that examination of the issues in the report was timely since they believed that a modern, fair, and transparent personnel policy, of which placement and promotion were an important part, and its strict implementation, were crucial determinants of effective future performance of the United Nations.

16. Although this report is primarily centred on the United Nations Secretariat, the policies of the funds and programmes, such as UNDP, UNFPA and UNICEF also come up for consideration.

17. The Inspectors recommended that the Secretary-General should take urgent measures to review and improve all personnel policies and procedures as required in General Assembly resolution 47/226. He should also issue specific guidance to establish clearly the responsibility and accountability of programme managers for the proper the use of human resources, as well as sanctions for non-performance. The sanctions should include reimbursement for any financial loss suffered by the United Nations as a result of gross negligence, such as improper motivation, wilful violation, or reckless disregard of Staff Regulations, Staff Rules and established policies regulating recruitment, placement and promotion.

18. The General Assembly deferred consideration of this report (issued as document A/51/656, with the Secretary-General's comments in A/51/656/Add.1) to its resumed fifty-first session, in April 1997.

JIU/REP/96/7 Comparison of methods of calculating equitable geographical distribution within the United Nations common system

19. This report reviews methodologies and compares the practices of various organizations in the United Nations common system on this subject, including some particular practices of relatively autonomous bodies, such as the World Food Programme, the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, UNICEF and UNDP. The report makes a number of recommendations that should be viewed as proposals to be applied in a progressive manner and based on a series of decisions taken in accordance with the prevailing atmosphere in each organization. This report is yet to be taken up by the General Assembly.

20. In 1995, JIU also issued the following two reports:

JIU/REP/96/1 The United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD): Review of institutional and programme issues

21. At the ninth session of UNCTAD, held in May 1996 in Midrand, South Africa, to which this JIU report was made available, far-reaching changes and reform measures were adopted for the legislative mechanisms as well as the technical and operational programmes and procedures of the organization, which largely subsumed the recommendations advanced by the Inspector in this JIU report.

JIU/REP/96/2 Feasibility study on the relocation of the United Nations Institute on Training and Research (UNITAR) to the Turin Centre

22. This report was issued as General Assembly document A/51/642; the Secretary-General's comments thereon are contained in document A/51/642/Add.1. In paragraph 7 of its resolution 51/188, the Assembly requested the JIU, in close cooperation with UNITAR and relevant United Nations bodies, to prepare a study on the training institution programmes and activities of the United Nations system, and to submit a report thereon for its consideration at its fifty-second session.